DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 224 848 UD 022 558

AUTHOR Chow, Esther Ngan-Ling
TITLE Acculturation and Self Concept of the Asian American Women.
PUB DATE [81]
NOTE 35p.; In: Reid, Pam, Ed., Puryear, Gwen, Ed. Minority Women: Social and Psychological Perspective. New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, forthcoming.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Acculturation; *Asian Americans; *Cultural Differences; Cultural Influences; Cultural Pluralism; Educational Attainment; *Ethnicity; Ethnic Stereotypes; *Females; Identification (Psychology); *Self Concept; Sex Discrimination; Sex Role; Social Influences; Socioeconomic Status

ABSTRACT

Acculturation and the development of positive self-concept among Asian American women are both complicated by factors associated with their ethnicity and gender. Physical differences, cultural barriers, and racial and sex discrimination have made difficult the complete assimilation of Asian females into American society. Furthermore, failure to recognize sociocultural diversity within Asian American groups has perpetuated the myth of Asian American women's success, and has led to the exclusion of Asian women as a whole from programs to aid minorities and women. In developing self-concept, Asian American women confront the problem of integrating often conflicting Asian and American cultural elements. Sex identity further complicates the process of self-concept development, because sex roles may also conflict in Asian and American cultures. In addition, Asian American women's self-concept is shaped by others' negative perceptions and stereotypes of them. Needed are both further research to understand the determinants of Asian American women's self-concept and policies that address the problem of developing a new image for this group. (Author/MJL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED224848

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Esther Ngan-Ling Chow
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ACCULTURATION AND SELF CONCEPT OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN *

Esther Ngan-Ling Chow
Department of Sociology
The American University
Washington, D.C.

DRAFT ONLY: Do not quote without the permission of the author

Running Head: Asian American Women

*In Pam Reid and Gwen Puryear (eds.), Minority Women: Social and Psychological Perspective. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, forthcoming.

ACCULTURATION AND SELF CONCEPT OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN

Esther Ngan-Ling Chow

Abstract

This paper explores the interplay of two major social factors--assimilation and social diversity --and their effects on the development of the Asian American women's self concept, Asian women continuously examine both their ethnic identity and sex identity, while discarding stereotypes attributed to them. A Typology of ethnic identity is formulated to suggest different cultural coping strategies. Bem's concept of psychological androgyny is introduced to discuss the sex role alternatives and sex role learning for the Asian American women. Some of the major implications of their changing self image with respect to future research, policy, program development, and political action are also discussed.

ACCULTURATION AND SELF CONCEPT

OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN

In the beginning of the 1980's, it is crucially important to recognize the emergence of Asian American[1] women as a group whose continual struggle for racial and sexual equality and for human liberation has great social and psychological significance for all people. Such emergence is, and will be, constantly shaped and modified by varying social forces which have impact on the social conditions of Asian American women. Therefore, this paper explores the interplay of two major factors--assimilation and social diversity --and, their effects on the development of the Asian American women's self concept. It also discuss some of the major implications of their changing self images and what impact these changes will have on future research, policy, program development and political action.

Assimilation and Social Diversity

In the immigration history of the Asian Americans, the most notable trends are: (1) the virtural absence of female immigrants at the beginning due to the repressive immigration laws (e.g., The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and The Immigration Act of 1924) prohibiting the entry of Asian to the U.S.A.; and (2) the predominance of female immigrants to this country in recent decades. After World War II, old immigration laws were repealed and new U.S. policies of "promoting family unity" and admitting Asians with certain needed skills were implemented, stipulating annual quotas for Asian women and their children. Hence, between 1950 and 1975, 51 to 60 percent of all immigrants from Japan, China, Philippines, and Korea were women (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1965-75). Their reasons for immigrating are primarily classified into three major categories--family chain,

occupational preference, and refugee--with the majority of cases falling into the first category. This recent predominate female immigration trend contributes demographically to the Asian population increase in this country, to the higher percentage of foreign born among Asian American women, especially the younger age cohort, and to the decrease of the male-dominated sex ration in the Asian population. Indeed, Asian American women constitute a significant group; their acculturation experiences should, therefore, be carefully examined.

For Asian American women, the central problem in adopting to American life is the extent to which they should retain their cultural tradition and the degree to which they should assimilate culturally and structurally into the American society. Equating white racial supremacy as cultural supremacy, those who advocate full assimilation tend to assume that any difference in the minority group from the white majority group is a deficiency. In the view, Asian American women must adapt to the host society and earn acceptance by the majority through the processes of acculturation and assimilation. Adaptation is judged by the American middle-class values (which are also male-oriented ones) of socioeconomic attainment, the goal of success, the norms for "proper" behavior and the amount of social pathology in the minority group communities. All this tends to produce "cloning effects" making all minorities and women social and cultural copies of American white males. The implicit assumption is that the more Asian American women's status resembles that of white women, the more it parallels the status of white men; hence, it is then said to be improved, to be relatively equal, and thus the minority woman is successfully "cloned".

A review of literature indicates at least three conflicting hypotheses concerning the assimilation of Asian Americans.[2] The first hypothesis

states that Asian Americans have been successfully assimilated into the American middle-class value system and such success has accounted for their high achievement, especially in the case of Japanese Americans (Kitano, 1976; Petersen, 1971; Feagin and Fujitaki, 1972). This hypothesis is derived from the race relations cycle theory formulated by Park (1950) and the assimilation paradigm conceptualized by Gordon (1964). For Park, the race relations cycle refers to a series of processes—contact, competition, accommodation, and assimilation--by which individuals and groups of individuals spontaneously acquire the language, characteristics, attitudes, habits, and modes of behavior of the dominant culture and are eventually incorporated into the host society. Based on this theory, Gordon (1964) further conceptualized various types of assimilation. Employing Gordon's paradigm, Kitano (1976) empirically demonstrated that Japanese Americans were substantially assimilated in terms of the cultural dimension, partly assimilated on the structural, marital, and identificational dimensions, and not significantly assimilated in the last two measures of assimilation (attitude receptional and behavior receptional assimilation).

Lending additional substance to this assimilation theory, Levine and Montero (1973) reported from their study of a three-generational national sample of Japanese Americans that Japanese Americans have increasingly from one generation to the next made great strides upward in social mobility due to their increased degree of assimilation. They also predicted that the traditional orientation in the Japanese American community would eventually disappear and be replaced by the American values than assimilation. In using the same data set, Montero and Tsukashima (1977) also found that assimilation is positively related to education; that is, the greater the assimilation of the respondent, the higher the educational achievement. Their findings further

suggest a casual linkage between these variables, noting that it is prior assimilation that stimulates educational achievement, rather than education that instigates absorption into the larger American society.

The second hypothesis suggests that the Asian American values account for the high educational achievement because Asians, especially the Japanese Americans, have successfully navigated within the American society while retaining their essentially Asian values (Caudill, 1952; Schwartz, 1970; Conner, 1976). Caudill and DeVos (1956) particularly pointed out that it is important to understand achievement within a cultural context, suggesting that Japanese American success is related to the compatible and complementary natures between Japanese and American values. Furthermore, this viewpoint suggests the possibility of bicultural existence, but it still closely parallels the first hypothesis of eventual assimilation.

The third hypothesis states that, in view of the existing racial stratification and the persistence of various subcultures within the American society, existing cultural and racial distinctions prevent the full acceptance of the Asians by the dominant white society; moreover the centripetal tendencies of assimilation generated by socio-economic attainment are impeded by barriers of de facto racial discrimination (Warner & Srole, 1945; Kuo & Lin, 1977). In early 1952, Lee pointed out that acculturation is a dynamic two-way process of interaction which involves an unconscious or conscious desire to become part of the "mainstream" in the American life and which simultaneously requires acceptance by the majority. Viewing the historical past of this group, Lee (1952) wrote than Chinese Americans have successfullly overcome barriers of housing restriction and have experienced some occupational mobility. However, he attributed this success primarily to the majority's tolerance and acceptance rather than to the Chinese's acculturation per se.

In a study of the assimilation of Chinese Americans, Fong (1965) distinguished two types: those people who consider themselves more American than Chinese and desire full social participation in the larger society; and those least assimilated ones who wish to confine themselves to ethnic enclaves in American, either through indifferences to or rejection of the majority culture. However, his findings suggest that the social and cultural orientations and sentiments of the Chinese are shifting gradually from the ethnic subculture to the large American community. As the American society becomes a positive reference group, its norms and values begin to guide, as well as modify, the perspectives and behavior of the Chinese.

In another study on assimilation of Chinese Americans in the East Coast, Kuo and Lin (1977) provided some empirical evidence demonstrating that education exerted sizable effects on the absorption of Chinese Americans into the mainstream, while Chinese friendships served to sustain the Chinese subculture. Kuo and Lin also found that most Chinese-Americans have preserved their key cultural values. The relatively slow pace of assimilation among Chinese Americans was attributed to their subcultural structure, which is a consequence of the racial and cultural differences between them and American whites, as originally hypothesized by Warner and Srole (1945).

The results of most studies mentioned above either show little concern for or fail to report sex differences in the data analysis. On the one hand, it seems to be clear that factors such as existence of physical differences, the cultural barriers and conflicts, the lack of total acceptance by the white majority, the prevalence of prejudice and discrimination, and institutional racism and sexism all have made the complete assimilation of Asian males and females impossible. On the other hand, the factors of social and cultural diversity within Asian American groups have also affected the motivation and ability of Asian women to acculturate in a greater or less degree.

To fully understand the present social conditions of Asian women, it is of utmost importance to take into account their social diversity in terms of nativity, national origins, age, generation and class factors. First of all, Asian American groups coming from the same geographical region are similar in physical appearance; yet these Asian subgroups have distinct intraethnic cultural variations in terms of their values, languages, customs, mannerisms, and ways of life, For example, while many Asian women are traditionally subordinate to their male counterparts, the Pilipino women have enjoyed status and power in the family and an informal control of decision-making about major matters (Pido, 1978). Also, Asian women immigrants have cultural values stressing education but which, at the same time, emphasize a male-oriented educational preference. Such values have led to slightly higher educational achievement by Asian men than Asian women (except for the Pilipino group) as indicated by the median years of school, number of school enrollments, and number of high school and college degrees reported in the 1970 Census data.

The failure to recognize the diversity of Asian women has led to the creation and the perpetuation of the myth of the Asian American's success; additionally Asian American women are wrongly considered as part of a successful "Model Minority" (Uyematsu, 1971; Okimoto, 1971; Takagi, 1973; Kim, 1973; Chow, 1977).[3] For instance, the immigrant groups include some highly educated and professionally trained Asian women as well as the working class women. Although the labor force participation of foreign born and U.S. born Asian women is appropriately the same, there is a distinct difference in the kind of jobs which they hold. When the nativity factor is taken into account, 21% and 47% of U.S. born Japanese and 24% and 51% of U.S. born Chinese women, in comparison to 13% and 19% of foreign born Japanese women and 22% and 24% of foreign born Chinese women are in professional and clerical work

respectively.[4] However, about one third of the Japanese (31%) and Chinese (37%) women of foreign birth are employed as operatives workers (DHEW, 1974,p. 88; Editor of Amerasia, 1977:133) which is twice the average of the U.S. female in the same occupational category. Therefore, so-called socio-economic success may be applied only to a certain group of Asian women, particularly those who are highly educated and professionally trained.

To equate that group's success with all Asian women's success is a fallacy of over-generalization which has serious policy consequences, including the exclusion of Asian women as a whole from many existing public and private programs designed to aid minorities and women. It also has made certain other minorities, especially some blacks, unsympathetic to the yellow power movement (Uyematsu, 1971:22). Such exclusion and rejection have detrimental effects on the disadvantaged and less visible groups (e.g., women living in Asian communities, IndoChinese women refugees, and wives of U.S. servicement). Consequently, their immense problems and needs are generally ignored. Some of these problems are the lack of English language facilities, (Kim & Condon, 1975; Kim, Kim & Hashimoto, 1975), racial and sexual stereotyping by others (Fujitomi & Wong, 1976; Kumagai, 1978) and the illiteracy of earlier Asian women immigrants (DHEW, 1974). Their occupational problems include high concentration in low rank, low prestige, and low paid jobs (Fong & Cabezas, 1976; Sung, 1975; DHEW, 1974; Editor of Amerasia, 1977, p. 133); inability to obtain licensing and certification due to restricted and monopolized licensure rules and procedures (Cordova, 1976); underemployment (USCCR, 1978, pp. 18-24; Vetter, Babco & McIntire, 1978); and lack of training in certain areas (such as administration, management, art, and humanities) that has led the Asian American women into segregated occupations (Fong & Cabezas 1976).

The above discussion on the interplay between assimilation and socio-cultural diversity has three major implications in terms of the self-concept development of the Asian American women. Firstly, for many reasons related to the personality characteristics, the majority's attitudes toward the Asians, Asian's responses to the majority, cultural barriers and conflicts, and other structural factors have made complete assimilation difficult. Thus, the self development of Asian American women may be uniquely different from the experience of whites and other groups. Secondly, the self development should be examined in the socio-cultural context, so that differences in self conception can be attributed to the cultural and/or subcultural variations existing within these diverse ethnic groups and between the Asian and the American structures. Finally, perservation of ethnic cultures and assimilation may not be mutually exclusive.

Such a relation seems to suggest that pluralism, a blend of traditionalism and assimilation stressing the uniqueness of ethnic culture and heritage, multi-cultural co-existence, and the integration of distinct ethnic groups within a common socio-political system, may be one of the viable alternatives for the Asian American. From this perspective, Asian American women would essentially enjoy the best of both worlds--East and West--for they would be able to realize the positive potentialities of social pluralism and keep the negative results of cultural conflicts to the minimum.

The Development of Self Concept

As an outgrowth of value conflict, identity crisis, and consciousness raising, Asian American women are developing a new self-concept. Because of their dual statuses, Asian American women derive their identification and self esteem from both their ethnicity and gender. If acculturation is seen as a dynamic two-way interaction, the personality development of Asian American

women depends not only on their own self identification, but also on others' perception of them. For Asian American women to form a healthy self concept, it is crucially important for them to deal with others' perceptions in order to understand the racial and sexual stereotypes applied to them.

Ethnic Identity and Consciousness

Erikson (1963) developed the concept of ego identity, seen as an embracing self-concept which provides answers to basic questions of "Who am I? What am I worth? Where am I going?" Identity is crucial both to developing an ideology and to social action. It helps an individual cope with existential anxiety by defining the purpose and nature of human existence, and it also helps the individual to determine ways to deal with social realities. In the search for ego identity, ethnic membership becomes one of the important factors in this self-crystalization of identity (Erikson, 1963). Specifically, ethnic identity refers to the aspect of self which is influenced by ethnic background and cultural values.

Common values--such as an emphasis on education, hardwork, and frugality--shared by both Asian and American societies continue to motivate Asian women to strive, to raise their educational and occupational aspirations, and to be industrious. However, the self concept of Asian American women is also influenced by the Asiatic doctrines of filial peity, obedience to authority, the subjugation of the individual to the group, a sense of fatalism, a strong sense of family solidarity, self control, self-abasement, and fear of group criticism (Masuda, Matsumoto, and Meredith, 1970; Fujitomi and Wong, 1976; Caudill & DeVos, 1956; Hsu, 1971). These values are in contrast to and in conflict with American values of individualism, egalitarianism, achievement, independence, future orientation and mastery of one's environment (Kluckhorn, 1951; Parsons, 1951). The actualization of these

Asiatic values fosters submissiveness, passivity, pessimism, timidness and an adaptive rather than an active strategy of coping with one's world; the realization of American values fosters self interest, aggressiveness, initiative, independence, and expressive spontaneity. Combining these two cultures is difficult for Asian American women, particularly when there are no available role precedents and a lack of role models to emulate.

During the 1960's civil rights movement, a new era of ethnic consciousness developed and it awakened Asian Americans into raising their ethnic awareness, giving them a sense of ethnic pride and self worth based on their minority group status. Many Asian men and women (mostly college students who were middle-class, U.S. born, English speaking, and indifferent or negative toward their parental culture) became interested in discussing the pressing issues confronting the Asian Americans. They became involved in community-oriented social services to aid the poor, the needy, and the immigrant families. Many of their fruitful discussions from the "rap" sessions and classes were published in books and journals, including the first journal on Asian Women (1971). In major U.S. cities with a high concentration of Asians, these efforts by Asians were institutionalized in Asian American studies programs in major colleges and universities and in service centers (e.g., Asian American Law Collectives, Asian Women's Health Center, I Wor Kuen for women and other basement workshops). It is within these institutions and through frequent contact with people of one's own kind that a great sense of personal and social responsibilities developed, and Asian men and women were able to establish or to retain their own ethnic identities.

Only few studies have attempted to empirically demonstrate the degree and the type of Asian American's ethnic identification. Specifically Masuda, Matsumoto and Meredith (1970) constructed an Ethnic Identification

Questionnaire (EIQ) to study the ethnic identification of Japanese Americans. They found that the total ethnic identity scores in their Seattle sample did not differ within generations, but differences between generations were all highly significant. Their data supported the hypothesis that erosion of ethnic identification existed among the three generations; however, the data do still indicate a large residual of ethnic identity among the youngest generation. Sex was not a significant factor, although it played a part in the endorsement of particular items. Some differences in male and female personality structures among the Nisei reflect cultural conflicts in sex roles.

When Matusumoto, Meredith and Masuda (1970) compared the Seattle sample with the Honolulu sample of Japanese Americans, the latter exhibited less ethnic identification, with the exception of the Issei (oldest generation). Possible reasons for this unexpected result were explained in terms of immigration and community history, greater structural assimilation in the areas of political and economic power and social interrelationships, middle-class status conformity, personality differences and varying definitions of ethnic identity. Some qualitative differences between the Seattle and Honolulu sexes in their responses to the Ethnic Identification Questionnaire (EIQ) were reported. Finally, in their cross-cultural comparison of these two samples with the Tachikawa in Japan, Masuda, Hasegawa and Matsumoto (1973) provided data to support the hypothesis of attenuated ethnic identity across generations. There were no significant sex differences found in Seattle or Honolulu, but Tachikawa females tended to score higher on ethnic identification.

Though the work done by Masuda and his associates constitutes one of the few efforts to research the identity problem of the Asian Americans, some of their conceptual and methodological weakness should be noted. First of all, they conceptualized ethnic identity as undimensional, which can be seen as

continuum ranging in degree from low to high, rather than multidimensional. Secondly, they operationally defined ethnic identity as having the quality of "Japaneseness" and considered it as an actual measure of acculturation into American society. In other words, they implicitly identified the lack of "Japaneseness" as a social indicator of a greater degree of cultural assimilation into the host society. No attempt was made to measure empirically the extent to which Japanese Americans have acquired American values. Thridly, a validity problem of EIQ regarding what this instrument is purported to measure is not explicitly clear in the different reports. A limited effort was made to establish the construct validity of EIQ. Hence, this instrument may be accepted at least on the basis of logical and face validity.

Sue and Sue (1971) also present a framework of personality development for the Chinese Americans. Based on clinical evidence, they reported three types of selves as the results of acculturation experience of this Asian group: (1) the traditionalists, whose self is made subservient to the codes of society and others; (2) the marginal types who find self-worth in the denial of their subculture and generate intense feelings of guilt and self-hatred; and (3) the Asian American personality types who integrate their past experience with present conditions. Unlike the marginal persons, members of this last type associate with their ethnic relations without embarassment, and unlike the traditionalists, they accept that they have some guilt feeling for their unwillingess to fully accept familial wishes. The difference is less a rejection of ethnic ways than an attempt to preserve certain ethnic values in the formation of a new identity.

The work of Sue and Sue constitutes one step beyond those taken by Masuda et al. Sue and Sue recognized that two forces, traditonalism and

assimilation, operate simultaneously, affecting the development of the self concept of the Asian American. Hence, their framework seems to suggest the possibility that ethnic identification of cultural values is more than unidimensional. Furthermore, they considered that these factors are not mutually exclusive and also suggested the possibility of cultural integration. Although the third type, Asian American personality, implies cultural pluralism, it obscures the ways in which an individual integrates both Asiatic and American values. Whether the individual acquires both values in the same way remains unclear. Finally, the framework of Sue and Sue is more static than dynamic in its conceptualization. A better framework would be one which incorporates the situational factors which encompass behavior that may reflect Asian or American values, depending on the particular context and on the individuals with whom one is interacting. In other words, one can retain one's ethnic values, but depending on the situation, one may choose to display either Asiatic or American modes of behavior when dealing with members of either one's own culture or of the dominant society.

The newly constructed typology of ethnic identity consists of two major dimensions, namely, Asiatic and American modes of thinking in terms of attitudes and values.[5] Each dimension takes on values ranging from high to low, and thus both form four main types of ethnic identity (see Figure 1):

Figure 1 about here

---

(1) The Traditionalist (low on American mode, High on Asiatic mode) tends to confine herself to her ethnic enclave, to retain a great part of the traditional values, and to be negative toward the American culture. Her self worth is defined by obedience to parents and by behavior bringing honor to the family and her ethnic group. Tension and guilt occur when feeling is in conflict with traditional expectation and when the individual experience difficulties in dealing with members of the host society.

(2) The Assimilationist (high on American mode, low on Asiatic mode) tends to question traditional values, to defy parental authority, and to reject her ethnic culture. Existing between the margin of two cultures, she suffers from an identity crisis with intense feelings of guilt, self-denial, and self-hatred. She defines her self worth in terms of acceptance by Caucasians and considers herself more American than Asian, and desires access to all avenues of opportunity in the host society.

(3) The Pluralist type (high on both American and Asiatic modes) tends to incorporate the viable aspects of both minority and majority cultures by integrating her past experiences with her present conditions, by attempting to balance her responsibilities at home, at work and in the community, and by showing concern about the relatedness of all people. Her self worth is defined by ethnic pride in her frequent association with her own people and by her abilities to retain many aspects of the traditional culture, while fully participating in the mainstream of the American society. This type, an outgrowth of continual reconciliation between two cultures for a pluralistic cultural co-existence, has a dialectic element that includes conflict and contradiction as part of the dynamic process of acculturation; thus, each integration is only a temporary state leading to an affirmative, but ever changing, identity.

(4) The ambivalent type (low on both American and Asiatic modes) tends to reject both the traditional and the host cultures and to exhibit a great degree of social and cultural alientation. She is relatively isolated from members both of her own ethnic group as well as of the host society and derives little cultural meaningfulness from either world. She will withdraw from social reality when she feels ambivalent about her socio-cultural existence. Self worth is individualistically defined as it fits the situation, and anomic feeling will be developed.

Finally, this typology is an ideal type and is subject to empirical testing. The dominant types of cultural coping are needed to empirically demonstrated by newly collected data in the future.

Sex Identity and Androgyny

In addition to ethnic identity, the self system of Asian American women is compouneded by the sex identity which incorporates those aspects of female roles in relation to their male counterparts. Both historically and cross-culturally, sex identity and sex roles have been typically conceptualized into two complementary domains of traits and behavior--masculinity and femininity, male and female roles. Femininity and masculinity are frequently treated as two extremes of a single continuum and they are, by definition, inverse correlatives. In other words, an individual must be either masculine or feminine, and can hardly be both. According to Parsons and Bales (1955), masculinity has been associated with an "instrumental," cognitive orientation focusing on getting things done or problems solved. Femininity, on the other hand, has been associated with an "expressive" orientation, an affective concern for the welfare of others and the harmony of the group. Also, Erikson (1964) points out a similar dischotomy of the "inner" space

representing masculine concern and of the "outer" space indicating feminine domain. Erikson thinks that such a psychic distinction stems from biological differences between the sexes.

This sex-types ideology is evident in the Asian culture which defines clearly appropriate roles and expectations for males and females and is further perpetuated by family and other agents of socialization. Asian culture tends to foster and reinforce sex role learning of feminine characteristics such as submissiveness, passivity, affiliation, altruism, adaptiveness, and timidness and to discourage acquisition of so-called masculine traits such as activism, independence, assertiveness and competiveness. (Fong 1965 and 1973; Meredith, 1973; Weiss, 1973). The Asian family, especially an immigrant one, is characterized by a hierarchy of authority based on generation, age, and sex. Young women are at the lowest level, subordinated by the dominance of father-husband-brother-son, and by well-defined sex roles for father as a bread-winner and decision-maker, mother as a compliant wife and home-maker. As Fujitomi and Wong (1976:236) point out, the Asian family tends to support the development of the male's personality and aspirations, while discouraging females from forming any sense of high self-esteem and individuality. Payton-Miyazaki (1971:117) writes that Asian women are placed in a worse condition than white women, since socialization emphasizing their family role contradicts the cultural emphasis on achievement by seeking education, work and social activities in the larger community. In spite of high educational aspirations, family pressures force some Asian women to let their brothers be educated first; an Asian woman is to marry, to raise children, and to be a dutiful wife before becoming active in society at large

(Chun-Foon, 1971; Hsu, 1971).

Related studies attest to the subservient role imposed upon Japanese, Chinese, and Korean American females in contrast to the roles assumed by Asian men and Caucasian males and females (Blane & Yamamoto, 1970; Hsu, 1971; Kim, 1975; Yun, 1976). Although Pilipino women may be an exception to this secondary role relationship, even they face Asiatic values that inhibit independence and serve to counteract their egalitarian sexual status (Stoodley, 1957; Pido, 1978).

Many recent writings by Asian feminists and other researchers are about the changing role and status of Asian women (Asian women, 1971; Fujitomi & Wong, 1976; and Kumagai, 1978). Although acceptance of the Feminist movement by Asian women has come from primarily middle-class college-educated students, professional women, and community activists, it has already had some impact on some Asian women (Wong, 1976). Many of them have begun to recognize the importance of their sex identity vis-a-vis ethnic identity, to examine their limited role alternatives, to unite among themselves, and to discuss issues, problems, and needs specific to women (e.g., birth control, child care, health problems, ERA, and etc.). However, some of them still feel that their participation in the white women's movement may alienate Asian men, experience role overload in combining family with work, and feel more obligated to service their ethnic community than the movement.

In this transitional stage of discarding old images and developing new ones, the sex role attitudes of the Asian women will progressively move from a "traditional" stance to a more egalitarian one. Any attempt to change traditional sex role arrangements is considered a rebellion against patriarchal rule and a threat to the male's status quo. Hence, it is expected that the readiness to accept and to actualize sex role changes will be more

evident among Asian women than Asian men. A few studies have empirically demonstrated the difference between the changing attitudes of Asian women as compared to Asian men. Fong and Peskin (1969) reported that college-educated Chinese females feel alienated from and rebel against traditional expectations of what is appropriate for Chinese females. Based on the results of a questionnaire, Arkoff, Meredith and Dong (1963) reported that Japanese American males were more male-dominant and their female counterparts were more egalitarian in their attitudes toward marital roles. Fong (1970) showed that the pattern of social interaction between Chinese males and females is steadily moving away from the traditional pattern of male dominance towards sex equality.

Specifically relevant are the survey findings of Fong and Peskin (1969) who reported that China-born male and female groups exceeded American norms on the Femininity Scale; that is, both males and females were higher in terms of their psychological femininity. According to the sample taken, the naturalized females scored the highest and the visa female students scored the lowest, with male groups (naturalized and visa) falling in between. However, some visa females appear to exhibit a masculine style by demonstrating an unusual degree of self-reliance and independence by coming to the U.S. for higher education. Therefore, this research finding implies that it is empirically possible for the Chinese women to be both feminine (score high on Femininity Scale) and masculine (exhibiting socially defined male qualities) at the same time. This duality is especially relevant to Bem's concept of androgyny which she introduced in 1974.

According to Bem, psychological androgyny denotes the integration of both masculinity and femininity within a single individual. This concept is based on the assumption that sex-typing is an undesirable process

serving to prevent both men and women from developing as full and total human beings. It also assumes that a broader range of behavior allowing the individual to freely engage in both masculine and feminine behaviors is beneficial to the person's general psychological and social adjustment. Furtheremore, the concept of androgyny implies that it is possible for an individual to be both masculine and feminine, both instrumental and expressive, both assertive and yielding, depending on the situational appropriateness of a given behavior. Therefore, an androgynous self-concept would allow Asian women to freely engage in the wider range of behavior available to them. Hence, Asian women would not be trapped in their sex roles and could respond to situations spontaneously during a process of self-actualization. Research findings reported by Bem and her associates (Bem, 1975 and 1977; Bem and Lenny, 1976; Bem, Martyna and Watson, 1976) support the high likelihood of above sex role orientation and behavior.

Racial and Sex Stereotypes

The development of an integrated self concept also depends on other to perceive a more realistic perception of Asian women by others. The distorted, mystical, and romanticized stereotype of the Asian woman in the mind of the white majority and others must be changed. The stereotype of Asian women appears to be a mixture of their racial and sexual traits. They are perceived as docile, quiet, shy, exotic, submissive, demure, and erotic (embodied in characters such as "China doll," "Suzie Wong sex pot", "Geisha girl" "efficient Dragon Lady") good housekeepers and dutiful wives--all catering to the male's delight. These perceptual biases grew out of the anti-Asian feeling generated in the early immigration of the 1900's the experience with Asian women brought back by American G.I.'s and other American men, and the popular myth promoted by the mass media about exotic women in Asia.

The above racial and sexual stereotypes have been detrimential to the development of positive self identity among Asian women. Racial stereotypes (e.g., slanted eyes, petite, flat chested, etc.) contribute to feelings of inferiority or self-hatred. If they subscribe to the American values of sexual attractiveness, they whant to resemble the American"cover girl" type. Furthermore, Asian women are often seen as sex objects and sex commodities treated with little respect, fitting well into the dichotomous images of the virtuous, pure madonnas for white women and exotic, evil whores for Asian women. Fujitomi and Wong (1976) also point out that even favorable stereotypes are dehumanizing and are intended to legitimize Asian women as eligible candidates for marriage to American males. This may also be seen as a "put down" for the Asian male as well. On the other hand, Asian men stereotype their own women by defining for them what it means to be "traditional" or "unfeminine." Contrari-wise, they can also be attracted by the American standard of beauty and prefer women other than their own kind.

As sexual awareness and consciousness are raised, it is expected that Asian women will discard their old sex images and develop a new identity for themselves. Both negative and positive stereotypes are detrimental to the development of Asian women's self concept. When they are much less subject to categorizations and stereotypes, Asian women will be more able to develop as persons in their own right.

Some Major Implications

In light of the above discussion, several major implications for future research, policy and programs, and political action concerning Asian American women should be noted.

For Research

In view of current influx of immigrants and refugees from Southeast Asia and other parts of Asia, future research should carefully study the immigration trends and patterns of the Asians and systematically examine the impact of immigration on Asian American groups in this country. Future research should take into consideration the socio-cultural diversity among Asian groups and the unique attributes of each group when the occurrence of a social phenomenon (including attitudes and behavior) is being investigated. Factors such as nativity, ethnicity, age, generation, sex, class and other social characteristics should be taken into account in the analysis as possible controlling variables. Special attention should be given to the sex factor, a variable frequently ignored by researchers in many of the studies on Asian Americans.

Indeed, the typology of ethnic identity brought forth in this paper, requires empirical testing. This typology, if conceptualized, is an ideal type that is depicted in a logical polar form for the sake of identifying each of the distinctly different characteristics. Each type is treated as a pattern of cultural coping. Its appropriateness is situationally specific and individually defined depending on the individual's evaluation of the functional consequences of a particular strategy for a specific situation (cf. Merton's functional paradigm, 1957). Hence, it is highly probable that the traditional type may be most appropriate and feasible in a given circumstance; the same holds true for the assimilationist type. In this case, the three hypotheses discussed at the beginning of this paper do not conflict, since they simply reflect the various types of cultural alternatives. Also, note than, an implicit assumption of this typology is that the pluralistic type may provide a more desirable cultural coping

strategy than other types because of its flexibility, situational specificity, and cultural relativism (less enthnocentric in orientation). However, this assumption needs to be substantiated by empirical evidence.

As to sex identity, Bem and her associates have demonstrated the empirical reality of androgyny. However, additional research is needed to further test this concept among the Asia American population.

For Policy and Programs

The issues and problems concerning Asian women are not individual matters, but social realities which should be recognized as public policy issues and problems that require social action. Policies and programs designed to aid minorities and women should be non-racist and non-sexist, reflect the concerns of Asian women and meet their specific needs. To work toward the solution of specific problems of Asian American women, existing government and private programs should include Asian women as beneficiaries to provide them needed resources, fundings, and facilities.

Specifically, future educational programs for Asian women should highlight cultural pluralism by recognizing their right to maintain their culture and ethnic heritage. These programs should include English tutorial projects, bilingual/bicultural education, and multi-cultural and international education curricula which help the Asian children and adults acquire English language skills without sacrificing their own native language facilities and their cultures. Special programs should be designed to help the children to seek sex-role alternatives and to acquire non-sex-typed traits and behavior thru the use of non-stereotypic textbooks, instructional materials, and curricula. Also needed are non-biased and non-discriminatory counseling programs helping

Asian females at various age and educational levels recognize a wide range of career options, familiarizing them with significant Asian women who could serve as role models, and equipping them with leadership skills. All of this is necessary to maximize their educational and occupational potentials.

If the foreign policy of the U.S. government continuously allows IndoChinese refugees and Asian immigrants to come to America, a comprehensive program should be carefully planned and effectively implemented to prepare them both before and after their arrival. For instance, a systematic appraisal is needed to identify problems and to assess vocational needs of recent immigrants, so that appropriate vocational, educational, internship, and other transitional programs can be developed. Other occupational training, vocational rehabilitation and a job enrichment programs should allow Asian women, foreign born or U.S. born, to recognize their job alternatives, career options, and opportunities for advancement, so that they are free to move away from ethnic-related and sex-segregated occupations.

For Leadership and Political Action

Given a new self concept and image, Asian women will be able to develop their leadership potentials and skills to unite Asian women from diverse background, and to discuss issues and needs commonly shared by different groups of Asian women. Also, these leaders should be able to balance their social responsibilities at home, at work, and in the community, redefine their sex role arrangements at home, as well as break into male-dominant occupations and become spokespersons for the Asian communities. They will need to work effectively with groups at various levels and gain both grass-root and national support and constantly search for strategies that are effective in organizing all Asian women. They will,in effect, become role models for other Asian women.

Finally, Asian American women will be politically organized and work effectively with other minority women and white women in their common struggle for their rights as total persons. The social diversity may seemingly hinder the unity of various Asian women's groups. However, many Asian women recognize their differences as cultural assests and are able to resolve their differences in a collective manner. For various purposes, several Asian American women organizations (e.g., Organization of Pan-Asia American Women, Organization of Chinese American Women, Asian/Pacific American Women's Caucas, Asian American Women United, and etc.) have been recently established. Together, they will work cooperatively with Asian men as well as with other women groups. With this political awareness and activism, Asian women will be able in all aspects of their lives to deal effectively with their changing needs and problems and to increase their participation in the American society of the future.

Footnotes

1. The term "Asian American" refers to people coming from Far East, Southeast and Near East Asia as well as from the Pacific Islands. Because of the limited data about many of these groups, the discussion will primarily focus on the larger Asian groups such as the Japanese, Chinese, Pilipino and Korean. Conjectures made about them are not meant to apply to other Asian-Pacific women as well.
2. The discussion on the assimilation of Asian Americans focuses primarily on two major groups, Japanese-and Chinese-Americans, because of the lack of available studies pertaining to other Asian groups.
3. It is part of the minority women resolution passed during the International Women Year Conference held in Houston in November 19-21, 1977.
4. For detailed comparison, the percentage of occupational distribution for U.S. female population is 15.7% in the professional and technical workers category, 34.9% in clerical workers, 14.3% in operatives category. The Pilipino women will display a different occupation distribution due to the higher percentage of recent immigration of female professionals during the last two decades.
5. Unlike the personality framework originated by Sue and Sue (1971) and later criticized by Bem (1971), this conceptualization is not designed for therapeutic concerns, but for theoretical discussion (see the implication section of this paper). Due to space limitations, other historical, socio-cultural, and structural factors that may have affected the emergence, the developmental process and the consequences of self concept of the Asian American women cannot be fully discussed here.

		Asiatic Mode: High	Asiatic Mode: Low
ıerican Mode	High	Pluralist	Assimilationist
	Low	Traditionalist	Ambivalent

Figure 1. Typology of Ethnic Identity

References

Arkoff, A., Meridth, G., & Dong, J. Attitudes of Japanese-American and Caucasian-American students toward marriage roles. Journal of Social Psychology, 1963, 59, 11-15.

Asian Women. Asian Women. Berkeley, Ca.: University of California, 1971.

Bem, S. L. Psychology looks at sex roles: Where have all the androgynous people gone? Mimeographed paper presented at UCLA Symposium on Women, May, 1972.

Bem, S. L. Sex role adaptability: one consequence of psychological androgyny. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1975, 31, 634-643.

Bem, S. L. On the utility of alternative procedures for assessing psychological androgyny. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1977, 45, 196-205.

Bem, S. L., & Lenny, E. Sex typing and the avoidance of cross-sex behavior. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1976, 33, 48-54.

Bem, S. L., Martyna, W., & Watson, C. Sex-typing and androgyny: Further explorations of the expressive domain. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1976, 34, 1016-1023.

Blane, H. T., & Yamamoto, K. Sexual role identity among Japanese and Japanese-American high school students. Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 1970, 1:345-354.

Caudill, W. A. Japanese-American personality and acculturation. Genetic Psychology Monographs, 1952, 45, 3-102.

Caudill, W. A., & DeVos, G. Achievement, culture and personality: The case of the Japanese Americans. American Anthropologist, 1956, 58, 1102-1126.

Chow, E. N. L. An evaluation of Asian American's success. An Interim Report. Washington, D.C.: Office of Research, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, September 21, 1977.

Chun-Hoon, L. Jade Snow Wong and the fate of Chinese-American identity. Amerasia Journal, 1971, 52-63.

Connor, J. W. Joge Kankei: A key concept for an understanding of Japanese-American achievement. Psychiatry, 1976, 39, 266-279.

Cordova, D. L. Educational Alternatives for Asian/Pacific women. Conference on the Educational and Occupational Needs of Asian-Pacific American Women. Washington, D.C.: The National Institute of Education, in press.

Editor. Selected statistics on the status of Asian-American women. Amerasia Journal, 1977, 4, 133-140.

Erikson, E. H. Childhood and Society (2nd ed.). New York: Norton, 1963.

Erikson, E. H. Inner and outer space: Reflections on womanhood. In R. J. Lifton (Ed.), The Woman in American. Boston: Beacon Press, 1964.

Feagin, J. R. & Fujitaki, N. On the assimilation of Japanese Americans. Amerasia Journal, 1972, 1, 13-30.

Fong, P. L., & Cabezas, A. Y. Economic and employment status of Asian-Pacific women. Conference on Educational and Occupational Needs of Asian-Pacific American Women. Washington, D.C.: The National Institute of Education, in press.

Fong, S. L. M. Assimilation of Chinese in America: Changes in orientation and social perception. American Journal of Sociology, 1965, 71, 265-273.

Fong, S. L. M. Sex roles in the modern fabric of China. In G. H. Seward & R. C. Williamson (Eds.), Minority Group Adolesecents in the United States. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1970.

Fong, S. L. M. Assimilation and changing social roles of Chinese Americans. Journal of Social Issues, 1973, 29, 115-127.

Fong, S. L. M., & Peskin, J. Sex-role strain and personality adjustment of China-born students in America: a pilot study. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 1969, 74, 563-567.

Fujitomi, I. & Wong, D. The new Asian-American women. In S. Cox (Ed.), Female Psychology: The Emerging Self. Chicago, Ill.: Science Research Association, Inc., 1976, 236-248.

Gordon, M. Assimilation in American Life. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Hsu, F. L. K. The Challenge of the American Dream: The Chinese in the United States. Belmont, Ca.: Wadsworth, 1971.

Kim, B. L. Asian American: no model minority. Social Work, 1973, 18, 44-53.

Kim, S. D. Demonstration project for Asian American: an analysis of problems Asian wives of U.S. Servicemen . Seattle, Washington: Demonstration Project for Asian Americans, 1975.

Kim, B. L., & Condon, M. E. A Study of Asian Americans in Chicago: Their socio-economic characteristics, problems and service needs. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Mental Health, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1975.

Kim, S. D., Kim, J. G., & Hashimoto, B. Korean and Japanese war brides. Seattle, Washington: Demonstration Project for Asian Americans, 1975.

Kitano, H. H. L. Japanese Americans: The Evolution of a Subculture. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976.

Kluckhorn, C. Values and value-orientations in the theory of action: An exploration in definition and classification. In Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils (Eds.), Toward a General Theory of Action. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951.

Kumagai, G. L. The Asian women in America. Explorations in Ethnic Studies, 1978, 1, 27-39.

Kuo, W. H., & Lin, N. Assimilation of Chinese-Americans in Washington, D.C. The Sociological Quarterly, 1977, 18, 340-352.

Lee, R. Acculturation of Chinese Americans. Sociology and Social Research, 1952, 36, 319-321.

Levine, G., & Montero, D. Socioeconomic mobility among three generation of Japanese Americans. Journal of Social Issues, 1973, 29, 33-48.

Masuda, M., Matsumoto, G. H., & Meredith, G. M. Ethnic identity in three generations of Japanese Americans. Journal of Social Psychology, 1970, 81, 199-207.

Masuda, M., Hasegawa, R. S., & Matsumoto, G. The ethnic questionnaire--a comparison of three Japanese age groups in Tachikawa, Japan, and Seattle. Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 1973, 4, 229-245.

Matsumoto, G. M., Meredith, G., & Masuda, M. Ethnic identification: Honolulu and Seattle Japanese-Americans. Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 1970, 1, 63-76.

Meredith, G. M. Sex temperament among Japanese-American college students in Hawaii. In S. Sue & N. N. Wagner (Eds.), Asian-Americans: Psychological Perspectives. Palo Alto, Ca.: Science & Behavior Books, Inc., 1973, 95-100.

Merton, R. K., Social Theory and Social Structure. Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1957.

Montero, D., & Tsukashima, R. Assimilation and educational achievement: the case of the second generation Japanese-American. The Sociological Quarterly, 1977, 18, 490-503.

Okimoto, D. The intolerance of success. In A. Tachiki, E. Wong, F. Odo, & B. Wong (Eds.), Roots: An Asian American Reader. Los Angeles, Ca.: University of California, 1971, 14-19.

Park, R. Race and Culture. New York: Free Press, 1950.

Parsons, T. The Social System. New York: Free Press, 1951.

Parsons, T., & Bales, R. T. Family, Socialization, and Interaction Process. New York: Free Press, 1955.

Payton-Miyazaki, Y. Three steps behind and three steps ahead. In Asian Women (Eds.). Berkeley, Ca.: University of California, 1971, 116-118.

Pido, A. J. A. A cross-cultural change of gender roles: the case of Philipino women immigrants in Midwest city, U.S.A. Paper presented at the 6th Annual Conference on Ethnic and Minority Studies, University of Wisconsin, La Cross, Wisconsin, April 19-22, 1978.

Schwartz, A. J. Traditional values and contemporary achievement of Japanese-American pupils. Los Angeles: Center for the Study and Evaluation, University of California, 1970.

Stoodley, B. M. Some aspects of Tagalong family structure. American Anthropologist, 1957, 2, 236-249.

Sue, S., & Sue, D. W. Chinese-American personality and mental health. Amerasia Journal, 1971, 1, 36-49.

Sung, B. L. The Story of the Chinese in America. New York: Collier, 1971.

Takagi, P. The myth of assimilation in American life. Amerasia Journal, 1973, 2, 149-157.

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Social Indicators of Equality for Minorities and Women. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1978.

U.S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare. A Study of Selected Socio-Economic Characteristics of Ethnic Minorities Based on the 1970 Census. Washington, D.C.: DHEW Publication No. (OS) 75-121, II, July, 1974.

U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. Annual Report. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1965-1975.

Uyematsu, A. The emergence of yellow power in America. In A. Tachiki, E. Wong, F. Odo, and B. Wong (Eds.), Roots: An Asian American Reader. Los Angeles, Ca.: University of California, 1971, 9-13.

Vetter, E. M., Babco, E. L., & McIntire, J. E. Professional Women and Minorities: A Manpower Data Source Service (2nd ed.). Washington, D. C.: Scientific Manpower Commission, 1978.

Warner, W. L., & Srole, L. The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945.

Weiss, M. Selective acculturation and the data process: The pattern of Chinese-Caucasian inter-racial dating. In S. Sue and N. N. Wagner (Eds.), Asian-Americans: Psychological Perspectives. Palo Alto, Ca.: Science & Behavior Books, Inc., 1973, 86-94.

Wong, G. Q. Impediments to Asian-Pacific American women organizing. Conference on Educational and Occupational Needs of Asian-Pacific Women. Washington, D.C.: The National Institute of Education, in press.

Yun, H. The Korean personality and treatment considerations. Social Casework, 1976, 57, 173-178.